

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 MEXICO 05684 01 OF 02 070416Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-05 L-03 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00  
ICAE-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00  
NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 OES-07 OMB-01 /055 W  
-----029968 070429Z /75

O 070042Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9378

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 05684

EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SNAR, MX  
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - NORML LAWSUIT

1. EMBASSY HAS FOLLOWING LETTER, DATED 05 APRIL 1978,  
TO AMBASSADOR FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL OSCAR FLORES. LETTER  
IS ON STATIONERY HEADED "LIC. OSCAR FLORES, PROCURADOR  
GENERAL DE LA REPUBLICA". FREE TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:

QTE. DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR:

CONFIRMING OUR RECENT CONVERSATION, I WOULD LIKE TO AFFIRM  
BY THIS MEANS THE POINTS OF VIEW OF THE MEXICAN GOVERN-  
MENT ON THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CULTIVATION AND TRAF-  
FICKING OF DRUGS:

WITHIN THE RANGE OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES, THE CRIME  
AGAINST HEALTH, BECAUSE OF ITS SERIOUS EXTENT OF SOCIAL  
HARM, HAS ENGENDERED THE PREOCCUPATION OF MANY COUNTRIES  
SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS CENTURY, LEADING TO A FIRM  
INTEGRATION OF VARIOUS MEANS TO WAGE AN EFFECTIVE AND  
PERMANENT FIGHT AGAINST THIS FORM OF CRIMINALITY, WHICH  
THREATENS NOT ONLY PUBLIC HEALTH BUT ESSENTIAL VALUES OF  
THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY.

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 05684 01 OF 02 070416Z

BECAUSE OF OUR SOVEREIGN AND UNIFORM CONVICTION, MEXICO  
HAS PARTICIPATED IN THIS WORLDWIDE CONCERN FOR MANY  
DECADES.

THIS SIGNIFICANT CONVICTION TO FIGHT FOR THE WELL-BEING  
OF OUR YOUTH HAS BEEN EXPRESSED THROUGH THE SIGNING OF

MOST OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATIES ON THIS SUBJECT, PRINCIPALLY THE 1961 SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTICS, ITS AMENDMENTS, THE VIENNA PROTOCOL ON PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES, AND MANY INFORMAL BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, ESTABLISHING - ALWAYS WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMMUNITY - THE UNWAIVERING INTENTION OF COMBATTING THIS GRAVE WEAKNESS OF HUMANITY.

THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT'S FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS HAS BEEN APPLAUDED AS AN EXAMPLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS WHICH FACES THIS PROBLEM. ITS PLANNING AND THE STRUCTURE OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION, WHICH BECOMES MORE AND MORE SOLID, HAVE AS DEFINITIVE BASES THE CAREFUL STUDY OF THIS PHENOMENON, INCLUDING THE EXPERIENCE ACQUIRED THROUGH SUCCESSIVE CAMPAIGNS, THE ADOPTING OF ADEQUATE METHODS AND ADVANCED TECHNIQUES, PRINCIPALLY IN THE AGRICULTURAL ASPECTS, AND, ABOVE ALL, THE CONVICTION WHICH WITH EACH CAMPAIGN BECOMES MORE SECURE THAT OUR EFFORT PROTECTS A LAWFUL GOOD, COMMON TO ALL HUMANITY.

#### BACKGROUND OF THE CAMPAIGN:

IT IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE DRUG PROBLEM IN MEXICO IS THE PLANTING, CULTIVATION, AND TRAFFICKING OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES OF VEGETABLE ORIGIN, AND THAT GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS, CLIMATE, TERRAIN, AND WATER RESOURCES OF A VAST UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 05684 01 OF 02 070416Z

REGION OF THE WESTERN SIERRA MADRE MOUNTAINS ARE AMPLY SUITED TO THESE CROPS. THESE CIRCUMSTANCES PROVIDE MENACING REALITY TO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING WHICH, IF WE SEEK TO CONFRONT THEM SUCCESSFULLY, WE MUST OPPOSE NOT ONLY WITH UNLIMITED EFFORT BUT WITH THE BEST TECHNICAL RESOURCES AND WITH PROVEN EFFECTIVE SYSTEMS, EVEN IF THEY COST MORE AND REQUIRE GREATER ATTENTION THAN PRIMITIVE MEANS OF CROP ERADICATION.

TO GIVE AN IDEA OF THE VOLUME OF NATURAL DRUG PRODUCTION IN MEXICO, IT IS OPPORTUNE TO RECALL THAT IN THE YEAR 1977 WE DESTROYED 70,238 FIELDS OF MARIJUANA AND OPIUM POPPY, COVERING AN AREA OF 13,134 HECTARES, THE MAJORITY OF WHICH WAS IN MOUNTAINOUS AREAS WITH DIFFICULT ACCESS, DEEP CANYONS AND, IN GENERAL, AREAS WHOSE CHARACTERISTICS MAKE MANUAL DESTRUCTION IMPOSSIBLE.

THE METHOD WHICH HAS THUS FAR RESULTED IN THE BEST DIVIDENDS IN THIS FIGHT IS THE AERIAL SPRAYING OF THESE FIELDS, USING HERBICIDES WHICH, FOLLOWING PRECISE SELECTION WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURE AND HYDRAULIC RESOURCES AND OTHER SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

INSTITUTIONS, HAVE BEEN SPRAYED ON THESE FIELDS TO PRODUCE THEIR DESSICATION WITHOUT A PROBLEM OF CONTAMINATING EITHER THE GROUND OR WATER, AND, NATURALLY, TAKING ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO ASSURE THAT THE HERBICIDES ARE SELECTIVE AND DO NOT AFFECT OTHER AREAS OF NEIGHBORING VEGETATION. THIS LAST CIRCUMSTANCE, EVEN THOUGH STRICTLY CONTROLLED, ALSO HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF A MINIMUM POSSIBILITY OF COLLATERAL EFFECTS, SINCE MOST OF THESE ILLEGAL FIELDS ARE FOUND IN AREAS WHERE OTHER TYPES OF VEGETATION ARE SPARCE.

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 05684 02 OF 02 070417Z  
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ICAE-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00  
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O 070042Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9380

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 MEXICO 05684

CONTROLLED, ALSO HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF A MINIMUM POSSIBILITY OF COLLATERAL EFFECTS, SINCE MOST OF THESE ILLEGAL FIELDS ARE FOUND IN AREAS WHERE OTHER TYPES OF VEGETATION ARE SPARCE.

IN THE PARTICULAR CASE OF MARIJUANA, UPON DECIDING TO USE HERBICIDES AND AFTER PRIOR STUDIES ON POSSIBLE RESIDUAL EFFECTS, CONTAMINATION AND COLLATERAL EFFECTS, THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT THE APPROPRIATE SUBSTANCE WAS THE DESSICANT GRAMOXONE, WHOSE PROPERTIES ARE WELL KNOWN BECAUSE OF ITS WIDE USE IN MORE THAN TWENTY COUNTRIES TO DRY PLANTS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION AND ITS AMPLE MARGIN OF SELECTIVITY. THIS HAS PERMITTED AN EVALUATION OF ITS EFFECTS AND RESULTS DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS OF THE CAMPAIGN AND IT HAS OBTAINED A SUFFICIENTLY SATISFACTORY COEFFICIENT OF SAFETY.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THIS METHOD IS THE ONLY ONE WHICH PERMITS US TO OBTAIN ADVANTAGEOUS RESULTS IN THE MASSIVE DESTRUCTION OF NARCOTIC PLANTS. OUR HUMAN AND MATERIAL

RESOURCES COULD NOT REACH THIS FAR UNDER OTHER CONDITIONS, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE YEARLY NUMBER AND SURFACE AREA OF ILLEGAL FIELDS.

WE ARE AWARE THAT THIS MANNER OF WORKING REPRESENTS A HIGH UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 05684 02 OF 02 070417Z

COST IN HERBICIDE PRODUCTS AS WELL AS IN AIRCRAFT, SPECIALIZED PERSONNEL, TECHNICAL STUDIES ON CONTINUOUS EVALUATION, ETC. NEVERTHELESS, THE SOVEREIGN DECISION TO CONTINUE OUR WORK AS ONE OF THE OVERRIDING SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF MEXICO AND ITS GOVERNMENT TO PRESERVE THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF ITS YOUTH IS PERMANENT AND PARALLEL TO THE GREAT RESPONSIBILITY SIGNIFIED BY OUR INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

THIS DECISION, LIKE ALL THE METHODS AND STRATEGIES WHICH MAKE UP THE CAMPAIGN OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT AGAINST DANGEROUS DRUGS, FLOWS FROM ONE INTENTION: TO ERADICATE THE SOURCE OF THE PRODUCTION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS, PARTICIPATING THUS IN THIS TASK IN WHICH HUMANITY HAS COMMON INTEREST. ON THE BASIS OF THE RESULTS ACHIEVED, WE KNOW THAT IN THIS COUNTRY THE CULTIVATION OF DRUGS HAS REACHED ITS CRITICAL PHASE BECAUSE OF THE DETERMINED ACTION TO WHICH IT HAS BEEN SUBJECTED AND THAT OUR RESOURCES AND OUR EFFORTS MUST CONTINUE USING METHODS TO DESTROY FIELDS OF DRUGS BY HERBICIDES APPLIED UNDER TECHNICAL CONTROL IN THE MANNER THAT THE PROBLEM REQUIRES AND OVERCOMING DECEITFUL SPECULATION AND PRESSURES OF ALL TYPES.

CONSEQUENTLY, WE SHALL CONTINUE USING PARAQUAT UNLESS A SUPERIOR PRODUCT IS DISCOVERED AND APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORATE OF PLANT HEALTH OF THE SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURE AND HYDRAULIC RESOURCES.

THUS FAR, WE HAVE COUNTED ON THE ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION, THROUGH VARIOUS BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THIS TASK, AND THESE HAVE CONSTITUTED VALUABLE SUPPORT. HOWEVER, UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 05684 02 OF 02 070417Z

IF PRESENT SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS, THE PRESSURES OF LARGE INTERESTS WHICH FINANCE ILLEGAL CULTIVATION, OR A CHANGE IN CRITERIA OF CONTROL, ETC., SHOULD ALTER THE NATURE OF COOPERATION THAT EXISTS, THE CONVICTION OF

MEXICO TO CONTINUE FIGHTING THE CRIME AGAINST HEALTH  
SHALL NOT BE SUBVERTED. ON THE CONTRARY, WE SHALL PURSUE  
OUR CAMPAIGN WITHIN THE LIMITS OF OUR ABILITY AS THE BEST  
EXAMPLE OF RESPECT FOR THE OBLIGATION UNDERTAKEN IN 1961,  
A RESPONSIBILITY IN WHICH, BY OUR SOCIAL BELIEF, WE ARE  
ALL INVOLVED.

I TAKE THIS OCCASION TO REITERATE TO YOU THE ASSURANCE  
OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC (SIGNED) LIC.  
OSCAR FLORES. END QUOTE.

2. SIGNATURE ON LETTER WAS ACKNOWLEDGED BY CONSUL  
GENERAL VERNON D. MCANINCH. ORIGINAL BEING POUCHED  
TO DEPARTMENT (S/NM). THOMPSON

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## Message Attributes

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